



JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
23 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0023

SUSAN A. GENDRON
COMMISSIONER

Exhibit #IV.A.

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Susan A. Gendron, Commissioner*

DATE: October 10, 2007

SUBJECT: Major Capital School Construction Program; *Concept Approval Consideration*; Brewer School Department, New PreK-8 School Construction Project.

STATEMENT OF FACT

The proposed project in Brewer achieves major school consolidation in the city. The school will house all elementary (preK-8) students that are currently attending five different old, inefficient school buildings. The new school will be more energy efficient; it will permit the Brewer School Department to streamline transportation, and it will result in much better use of staff time by avoiding travel between schools and duplication of services.

The new school will be constructed on the Pendleton School site that was closed a year ago. The site also has a track that is used by the high school and the community. The track will be moved a very short distance and will remain on the school site. Brewer school officials and State personnel are working to clear an encumbrance on the site due to a recreational federal grant received by Brewer in the 1960s. This issue will be resolved in the immediate future.

The school is designed to house 1,050 students. It is a two-story structure and fits well on the planned site. The school is 145,800 square feet. Brewer will ask the voters to approve an additional 10,550 square feet, which is the proposed size of a performing arts center that if approved would become part of the building. This Concept Approval is being requested pursuant to M.R.S.A. Title 20-A, Section 15905(1).

Project Information:

Project: New PreK-8 School
Superintendent: Daniel Lee
Principal: Joan Staffiere
Architect: Richard Graves, WBRC
Schools to Close:
Capri Street Elementary
Pendleton Street Elementary (closed 2005)
State Street Elementary
Washington Street Elementary
Brewer Middle School

Project Budget Information:

Estimated total Project Cost: \$39,607,883

Local Only Cost (no State participation): \$2,770,500

Anticipated ME High Perf. Schools Energy Grant: \$120,000

Approved for State/Local Debt Service Subsidy: \$36,717,383

Superintendent Daniel Lee has provided the following project description statement:

The Brewer School Department currently has five school buildings spanning pre-K through eighth grade; one of which was closed in 2005 due to severe structural deficiencies. Hence, students in the affected school were relocated to temporary portable classrooms located on the remaining school sites. This has caused an overcrowding situation in already inadequate buildings constructed between 1925 and 1957. These schools are simply unable to meet today's educational needs. Therefore, we propose to construct a single facility and move approximately 925 elementary students under one roof. Maximizing common spaces to minimize construction cost is but one of the principal advantages of this arrangement. More importantly, there are numerous educational advantages and possibilities for educating all our elementary students at one site.

The proposed design has been carefully crafted to create five separate wings located on two stories. The first floor contains wings housing Pre-K and kindergarten, first and second grades. The second floor will house wings containing third and fourth grades, fifth and sixth grades, and seventh and eighth grades. Such an arrangement will facilitate developmentally appropriate cross grade groupings to maximize instructional effectiveness. The school will be located in a rather densely populated residential area thus encouraging many children to become more physically active by walking or biking to their neighborhood school.

At present, our K-5 students do not have access to a gymnasium, music or art areas. Technology is extremely sparse. Our middle schools students do not have proper science labs, health or foreign language rooms. Our School Committee and the Brewer District Trustees are steadfast that this new school should be closely entwined with concepts embodied in Essential Programs and Services (EPS) – much the same way EPS is linked to Maine's Learning Results. In conclusion, this project represents a significant investment in our city and holds the promise of expanded educational possibilities for future generations.

CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Construction Committee met on October 1, 2007, and voted unanimously to send this exhibit to the State Board of Education for consideration with an approval recommendation.

COMMISSIONER RECOMMENDATION

The Commissioner recommends that the State Board grant Concept Approval to the Brewer School Department for a preK-8 elementary school in Brewer, Maine, and approve the budget as presented.

*Prepared by the School Facilities Services Team